United Nations A/57/728–S/2003/170

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
12 February 2003

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 8
Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

Letter dated 4 February 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Serbia and Montenegro to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, following the adoption and promulgation of the Constitutional Charter of Serbia and Montenegro by the Assembly of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 4 February 2003, as previously adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on 27 January 2003 and by the Assembly of the Republic of Montenegro on 29 January 2003, the name of the State of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was changed to "Serbia and Montenegro". Accordingly, I should appreciate it if you made the appropriate arrangements so that as of 4 February 2003, the name of Serbia and Montenegro is used instead of the name of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for all official purposes within the United Nations. Consequently, all references to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in all resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council and in all United Nations official documents should be deemed to refer to Serbia and Montenegro.

The current representatives of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia continue to represent Serbia and Montenegro in the Organization.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dejan **Šahović**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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United Nations A/57/729–S/2003/171

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
12 February 2003

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 36 and 160

Security Council
Fifty-eighth session

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 10 February 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I should like to draw your attention to several recent incidents in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism directed against Israeli citizens.

On 5 February, Palestinian terrorists attacked an Israel Defense Forces post located at Har Grizim with automatic gunfire and hand grenades. Lieutenant Amir Ben-Arye, age 21, and Staff Sergeant Idan Suzin, age 21, were killed in the exchange, and two other soldiers were wounded. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, the terrorist unit of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's own Fatah movement, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine both claimed responsibility for the attack.

Yesterday morning, 9 February, a car bomb exploded near an IDF position in Gush Katif, wounding four soldiers. The car was packed with 150 kilograms of explosives and 10 mortar shells. Three terrorists riding in the car who were members of Islamic Jihad were killed in the explosion.

In addition, Israel has successfully thwarted scores of attempted attacks on civilian targets in recent weeks. On 28 January, the day of Israel's recent general election, the IDF foiled a number of planned terrorist attacks, among them an attempt by Islamic Jihad to detonate four car bombs simultaneously at various locations inside Israel. The IDF also prevented several attempts by Hamas and Islamic Jihad to dispatch suicide bombers into Israel from Nablus, the villages of Tamun and Tubas, and from Gaza.

Last week, Israel prevented another attempted attack when two Palestinian terrorists were arrested in northern Israel. The terrorists led Israeli security personnel to a belt of explosives of the type used by suicide bombers that had been hidden in a mosque. Israeli sappers were able to remove the 15 kilograms of explosives attached to the belt, which were packed with nails and other projectiles to

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maximize the pain and suffering of the victims, and to detonate them safely, preventing damage to civilians as well as the mosque structure.

The above provides but a glimpse of the ongoing challenges facing Israeli security personnel as they work to prevent terrorist attacks. Almost every day, a planned attack is thwarted by Israeli security personnel. Had Israel's counter-terrorist measures not been in place, scores of Palestinian terrorists would have successfully infiltrated Israel and countless innocent lives would have been lost. These examples further underscore not only the absolute necessity of Israel's preventive actions, but also the continuing failure of the Palestinian leadership to take any action whatsoever to prevent terrorist attacks emanating from its territory.

Rather than acting to suppress acts of terrorism — which is their obligation under international law, Security Council resolutions, as well as signed commitments reached with Israel — the Palestinian leadership continues, at every opportunity, to express its support for acts of violence against Israeli civilians. As long as murderers are glorified as martyrs, and attacking civilians is perceived as legitimate, the phenomenon of Palestinian terrorism is bound to continue, endangering the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis and placing ever greater obstacles on the road to peace. Israel calls upon the international community to make clear its absolute rejection of terrorist tactics and to insist that the Palestinian Authority act to stop all acts of violence and terrorism, in accordance with its obligations under international law and signed agreements.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism that began in September 2000, which document the criminal terrorist strategy for which the Palestinian leadership must be held accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 160 and 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Arye **Mekel**
Chargé d'affaires, a.i.

United Nations A/57/730–S/2003/178

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
13 February 2003
English
Original: Arabic and English

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 36 and 160

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

Note verbale dated 12 February 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council and has the honour to transmit herewith a reply to the Israeli allegations contained in document A/57/717-S/2003/96 (see annex).

It would be appreciated if the text of the present note and its annex were circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 160 and 36, and of the Security Council.

New York, 12 February 2003

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Annex

Letter dated 12 February 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to address this letter to you in order to establish certain facts and to respond to the Israeli allegations contained in document A/57/717-S/2003/96 dated 27 January 2003.

Israel, which was established against a background of terrorism and which has continued to practise terrorism since the 1940s, has no right to accuse others of supporting or resorting to terrorism. All are aware that Israel has committed terrorist acts in several capitals and other cities in Europe, Africa and Asia, and in certain Arab countries. The names of the perpetrators and victims of such terrorism are known by all, whether the murder of Count Bernadotte or the massacres at Qibia, Deir Yassin, Qana, Jenin and Gaza. This is attested by the fact that a number of Israeli leaders and military officials were summoned before the courts on charges of genocide.

In the last two years alone, Israel has deliberately killed more than 2,160 innocent Palestinian children and civilians. Observers following developments in the Middle East know full well that the murders and acts of destruction perpetrated by Israel are part of a deliberate policy and ongoing process whose goal is to kill all hopes of establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region, break the will of the Palestinian people seeking to establish an independent State on its territory and eliminate any likelihood of withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, since Israel cares nothing for resolutions of international legitimacy and defies the entire international community, in particular the United Nations itself.

In the above-mentioned letter, Israel speaks of everything except the truth. Although it was responsible for killing and wounding innocent Lebanese civilians and destroying a number of homes belonging to Lebanese nationals in an incident that occurred on 21 January 2003, Israel blames the victims and those who defend them. Every time it address the issue of terrorism, Israel puts everyone else in the dock and presents its own behaviour — occupation, murders of innocent Arabs and destruction of their property — as being dictated by the needs of self-defence, whereas, in reality, it is the so-called acts of terrorism that are a defence against occupation, persecution, repression and racial discrimination.

The fact is that the Lebanese national resistance did not appear for no reason; it emerged as a response to the Israeli policy of occupation, murder and repression, which has been going on for more than 22 years. While welcoming certain resolutions adopted by the international community, Israel continues to pay no attention to an incalculable number of resolutions adopted by the Security Council, the General Assembly and the United Nations in general, and by other multilateral international political bodies, which ask Israel to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and respect international legitimacy.

Lebanon has responded to the Israeli allegations in numerous documents, in particular document A/56/1012-S/2002/829 dated 24 July 2002, in which it reaffirmed that Hezbollah's resistance was aimed at liberating the Lebanese territories still occupied by Israel and that it was responding to the violations of the

Blue Line which Israel committed daily by sending warplanes to overfly the entire Lebanese territory as a provocation. It is such acts that threaten peace and security in the region and that constitute a material breach of resolution 425 (1978), which Israel claims to apply.

It is ironic that Israel also refers in its letter to United Nations documents, since in all those documents the United Nations condemns Israel's practices and asks it to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and to cease its aggression against the Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian peoples. A mere perusal of these documents will demonstrate the truth of what we are saying.

Finally, Syria reaffirms the fact that, unlike Israel, it participates fully in international efforts to eliminate international terrorism. Syria cooperates with other countries and will continue to do everything in its power to help save innocent lives in responding to the genuine terrorism that threatens us all and the crimes against humanity committed by Israel.

(*Signed*) Mikhail **Wehbe**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative